

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE *

New York, Oct. 16, 1886.

ELIHU ROOT, ESQ., *Chairman*, and WILLIAM H. BELLAMY, ESQ., *Secretary*, of the *Republican County Convention*.

Gentlemen: I accept the nomination for Mayor tendered me by the Republican Convention. I appreciate the honor and shall endeavor to justify your confidence. If elected I shall do my best to serve the Republican Party by serving the city well.

During three years' service in the State Legislature fully half my time was occupied in dealing with the intricate municipal misgovernment of this city, and it became evident to me that there could be no great or effective change for the better in our City Government except through the unsparing use of the knife wielded by some man who could act unhampered by the political interests which sustain the present abuses, and without fear of either personal or political consequences. It is not enough that the Mayor refrain from making bad appointments or that he play a passively good part; to work a real reform he must devote his whole energy to actively grappling with and rooting out the countless evils and abuses already existing.

The chief reason for the continuance of these evils and abuses lies in the fact that hitherto no man having power has dared to deal with them without reference to the effect upon National and State politics. Many

* *New York Times*, October 17, 1886.

excellent gentlemen have deplored their existence and would have been glad to remedy them; but every effort against the spoilsmen who are eating up the substance of the city has been checked by the consideration that to assail them would affect unfavorably the control of some convention or the success of some election. Our City Government has been made a tender to National and State Party Government; the city is governed for the benefit of parties, instead of parties being governed for the benefit of the city. We are practically blackmailed to the extent of millions of dollars annually by a host of sinecurists whose return is rendered not in service to us but in protection and support to certain political leaders, candidates, and factions. Sooner or later the people of New York will realize that it is not sufficient merely to have at the head of their Government a man of high purpose and character, but that they must have one who shall also be entirely free from political entanglement with the beneficiaries of the present abuses; it is practically impossible for any member of the party now, and for so long past, dominant in our local affairs to work a real reform therein, for, no matter how good his aims, he would find himself at every step trammelled by a thousand personal and political ties.

Thanking you for the honor you have conferred upon me, I am, with great respect, yours very truly,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.